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Woodland Greetings.

WOODLAND

GREETING.

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Annie C. McQueen

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FAR from the city's rush of life,
Away from its noisy mirth and glare,
The Christmas-tide serenely smiles
On country scenes surpassing fair.

Fields and woodland, stretching wide
In boundless freedom, far and near,
Generous roads and highways broad,
No narrow ways of city here.

Nature's great heart of its store
Freely gives, begrudging nought,
Limits not, nor asks return,
Where her kindly aid is sought.

With mighty branches far outspread,
The forest monarchs stately stand,
Lifting high their snow-crowned heads
In proud survey of all the land.

Rough-barked oak and hickory,
Boasting giant strength and power,
Chestnut, august, high as they,
Wild cherry, vain of fairest flower.

But gentle, too, and generous all,
In summer shade and winter store,
Giving gladly, for their meed
Asking nothing, giving more.

HELPING with their wealth of good
To fill the store-house, barn and bin,
Against the time of cold and need,
And make the home more bright within.

Their great logs on the fire burn,
As winter evenings longer grow,
With store of nuts, the children group
Before the fire's ruddy glow,

To listen, as the farmer reads
The well-known story once again,
How Christ was born, a little child,
To bring good will and peace to men.

THE good wife lets her knitting fall,
Forgetful, as she listens too,
And Christmas night, long ages gone,
In vision bright is come anew.

Oh, stately homes, in grandeur dressed,
In boasted wealth and comfort cold,
Hemmed in by city walls of stone,
With air and sunshine sparsely doled;

Who envies thee thy majesty,
Beside the humble fireside,
Where love and sweet contentment make
A halo for the Christmas-tide.

ANNIE C. MCQUEEN.

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